02142

1968/06/12

Department of State

TELEGRAM

~~SECRET~~ REA523

PAGE 01 PARIS 16113 121523Z

43
ACTION SSO 00

INFO /000 W

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NEJ 93-16
By [illegible], NARA, Date 5-24-93

Z 121508Z JUN 68
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 2923

~~S E C R E T~~ SECTION ONE OF TWO 16113

2 8 8 1 Q

1968 JUN 12 AM 11 42

N O D I S/HARVAN

DELTO 268

SUBJ: FLASH SUMMARY - EIGHT MEETING

FROM HARRIMAN AND VANCE

1. I PREFACED MY PREPARED REMARKS BY WELCOMING LE DUC THO TO OUR TALKS, SAYING THAT WE WERE WELL AWARE OF HIS POSITION, IN THE COUNCILS OF HIS GOVERNMENT, AND THAT WE HOPED HIS ARRIVAL WAS A GOOD AUGURY. THO, WHO SAT ON THUY'S RIGHT, THANKED ME FOR MY WORDS OF WELCOME. THO IS A MAN WHO IS OBVIOUSLY ACCUSTOMED TO EXERCISING POWER AND HAS THE SELF-ASSURANCE OF SUCH A POSITION.

2. I THEN READ MY PREPARED STATEMENT, STRESSING HEAVILY THE TERROR ATTACKS ON THE CIVILIAN POPULATION OF SAIGON. WHEN I FINISHED AT 11:15, I PROPOSED A TEA BREAK.

3. DURING TEA BREAK THE TWO OF US TALKED WITH XUAN THYY AND LE DUC THO. XUAN THUY SAID HE HOPED THAT THE POSITIONS OF THE TWO SIDES WHICH WERE SO FAR APART AT THIS TIME MIGHT BE BROUGHT CLOSER TOGETHER. LE DUC THO ADDED WITH A SMILE, "BY MOVING TOWARD OUR POSITION." XUAN THUY THEN ASKED A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ABOUT SENATOR KENNEDY'S DEATH, INCLUDING OUR VIEW AS TO THE MOTIVE. HE ASKED SPECIFICALLY WHETHER IN OUR JUDGMENT IT WAS RELATED TO SENATOR KENNEDY'S VIEWS ON THE WAR. WE SAID THAT IT WAS NOT AND WAS DONE BY A PALESTINIAN ARAB WHO WAS APPARENTLY MOTIVATED BY SENATOR KENNEDY'S SUPPORT OF

~~SECRET~~

Copy LBJ Library

ISRAEL. WE THEN OPENED THE ISSUE OF PRIVATE, SECRET DISCUSSIONS, SAYING THAT EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT SUCH DISCUSSIONS ARE NECESSARY IN ANY INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS. XUAN THUY REPLIED THAT IT WAS CUSTOMARY TO HAVE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TALKS MOVING IN PARALLEL, BUT THAT HE DOUBTED THAT PRIVATE TALKS WOULD BE HELPFUL AT THIS TIME BECAUSE OUR POSITIONS WERE SO FAR APART. WE RESPONDED BY SAYING IT WAS FOR THAT VERY REASON THAT WE BELIEVED IT WAS IMPORTANT TO HAVE SUCH TALKS IN AN ATTEMPT TO MOVE THE POSITIONS CLOSER TOGETHER. WE SUGGESTED IT MIGHT BE DESIRABLE TO HAVE THE FOUR OF US PARTICIPATE IN SUCH CONVERSATIONS BUT THAT IF THEY PREFERRED A LOWER LEVEL, THAT WOULD BE FINE, AND IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES MR. HABIB WOULD BE AN APPROPRIATE REPRESENTATIVE FOR US. XUAN TYUAND LE DUC THO SAID THEY WOULD TAKE OUR SUGGESTION UNDER CONSIDERATION.

4. BY PRIOR AGREEMENT, HABIB ALSO IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH HA VAN LAU, SUGGESTED A PRIVATE MEETING BETWEEN LAU AND ANYONE ELSE FROM THE NORTH VIETNAMESE DELEGATION WITH VANCE AND HIMSELF. LAU REACTED WELL AND ASKED IF WE THOUGHT "WE COULD DO SOMETHING GOOD" IN SUCH A MEETING. HE WAS TOLD THAT WE BELIEVED SO AND IT WAS TIME TO GET DOWN TO SERIOUS PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS. HE WAS TOLD THAT WE WERE PREPARED TO MEET PRIVATELY AT ANY TIME AND ANY PLACE THEY MIGHT SUGGEST. HABIB SAID THAT IF IT WERE CONVENIENT WE COULD MEET AT THE HOME OF ONE OF THE US EMBASSY COUNSELORS WHERE PRIVACY COULD BE ASSURED, BUT THAT IF THEY HAD ANOTHER PREFERENCE, WE WOULD BE WILLING TO MEET AT THAT PLACE. LAU SHOWED NO HESITANCY IN DISCUSSING THE SUBJECT AND PROMISED TO LET US KNOW WHAT WAS POSSIBLE. IN ANOTHER CONVERSATION BETWEEN JORDEN AND NGUYEN THANH LE, JORDEN'S PRIOR INVITATION TO DINNER WAS ACCEPTED. LE SAID HE WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH JORDEN IN A FEW DAYS ABOUT A DATE.

5. AFTER THE BREAK, THUY SAID THAT HE WANTED TO COMMENT ON MY STATMENT. HE SAID THAT WE WANTED TO TALK ABOUT RELATED MATTERS BEFORE OR AT THE SAME TIME AS THE CESSATION OF BOMBING. THUY REPEATED THAT THE NVN POSITION REMAINS: "...THE US SIDE BRINGS AND UNCONDITIONAL CESSATION TO BOMBING AND ALL OTHER ACTS OF WAR AGAINST THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Copy LBJ Library

OF VIET-NAM AND THEN THE DISCUSSION WHICH TAKES UP EVERY MATTER OF INTEREST TO BOTH PARTIES."

6. THUY REPEATED HIS EARLIER STATEMENTS THAT AS LONG AS THE US CONTINUED ITS AGGRESSION IN SOUTHVIET-NAM, THE PEOPLE OF SVN WOULD FIGHT UNTIL TOTAL VICTORY. HE BLAMED CIVILIAN CASUALTIES IN SAIGON ON US AIR AND ARTILLERY FIRE.

Copy LBJ Library

11

Department of State TELEGRAM

~~SECRET~~ REA524

PAGE 01 PARIS 16113 02 OF 02 121545Z

44
ACTION SSO 00

INFO /000 W

2 8 8 2 Q

1968 JUN 12 AM 11 59

Z 121508Z JUN 68
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 2924

~~S E C R E T~~ SECTION 2 OF 2 PARIS 16113

N O D I S /HARVAN

DELTO 268

7. HE SAID THAT DESPITE US CLAIMS OF RESTRAINT, THE US HAS SHOWN NONE SINCE MARCH 31. THE BOMBING HAS BEEN CONCENTRATED IN A SMALLER AREA BUT HAS INCREASED IN QUANTITY.

8. THUY THEN LAUNCHED INT A REVIEW OF HISTORY, HANOI-STYLE. HE COVERED EVERYTHING FROM SEATO ("AGGRESSION" TO PRESENT "PUPPET" GVN, MENTIONING THE "FABRICATED EVIDENCE" ON WHICH GULF OF TONKIN RESOLUTION BASED THE "FACIST" REGIME OF DIEM, THE FAILURE TO HOLD ELECTIONS IN 1956, THE AMERICAN "SABOTAGE" OF THE 17TH PARALLEL AS A "PROVISIONAL MILITARY DEMARCATION LINE," WITH SOUTH VIET-NAM AS ONLY A "PROVISIONAL ZONE" TO PERMIT FRENCH REPATRIATION. WHITHOUT THE AMERICAN SABOTAGE THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN NO GVN AND VIETNAM WOULD HAVE BEEN REUNIFIED. THE US SET UP DIEM, AND THE PRESENT CLIQUE OF KY AND THIEU, FIGHTING BITTERLY AMONG THEMSELVES, COULD NOT SURVIVE WITHOUT US SUPPORT. THUY STRESSED THE "FRAUDULENCE" OF ALL SVN ELECTIONS.

9. THUY THEN REACHED END OF HIS LENGTHY AND IMMOBILE STATEMENT. HE SAID THAT NOW WAS A GOOD TIME TO STOP THE BOMBING. HE ANSWERED MY PROPOSAL FOR LESS PROPAGANDA IN THESE TALKS, BY CHARGING US WITH LOOKING FOR EVERY MEANS TO DISTORT THE TRUTH AND CONFUSE PUBLIC OPINION, WHILE THE DRV HAS COME HERE FULL OF GOOD WILL. THUY SAID THAT THEREFORE THE DRV MUST KEEP PUBLIC OPINION CORRECTLY INFORMED. HOWEVER, THE DRV WILL TAKE OUR SUGGESTION UNDER CONSIDERATION AND

~~SECRET~~

Copy LBJ Library

ANSWER IT AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME.

10. I BEGAN MY RESPONSE BY SAYING THAT I REJECTED THUYS DISTORTED VERSION OF HISTORY, BUT WOULD NOT ANSWER ALL HIS CHARGES NOW, BECAUSE THE TIME HAD COME TO CONCENTRATE ON MATTERS OF IMMEDIATE CONCERN.

11. I THEN REJECTED EMPHATICALLY THE RECURRING DRV CHARGE THAT WE ARE A NEO-COLONIALIST POWER, DISCUSSING OUR MAGNANIMITY TOWARDS OUR WORLD WAR II ENEMIES, GERMANY AND JAPAN, WHICH HELPED THEM TO TURN FROM PRE-WAR DICTATORSHIPS TO PROSPEROUS POST-WAR DEMOCRACIES. I MENTIONED WORLD WIDE POINT FOUR PROGRAM WITH INDIA AS LARGEST RECIPIENT. I DESCRIBED THE PHILIPPINES CANDIDLY AS A COUNTRY ONCE UNDER OUR CONTROL BUT LONG SINCE INDEPENDENT. I SAID HE WOULD BE LAUGHED OUT OF ANY OF THESE COUNTRIES IF HE SUGGESTED THEY WERE US PUPPETS.

12. I THEN DEALT WITH HIS RECURRENT CHARGE THAT THE GVN WAS A PUPPET. I SAID THAT I COULD NOT ALLOW THE COURAGE OF THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH VIETNAM TO BE SO MALIGNED. I REVIEWED THE CONSTITUTIONAL BASE ON WHICH A MAJORITY OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE ARE BUILDING THEIR GOV. I REPEATED THAT OUR OBJECTEVE IN VIETNAM IS FOR THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE TO DETERMINE THEIR OWN FUTURE FREE FROM TERRORISM AND OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE.

13. I THEN DEALT WITH THUYS CHARGE THAT WE USE "TOXIC GAS" IN VIETNAM. I SAID THAT IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT WE USE TEAR GAS IN SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES. I SAID THAT NORTH VIETNAM HAS DONE THE SAME, AND THE TEAR GAS IS USED IN RIOTS, SUCH AS THOSE HERE IN PARIS. I SUGGESTED THAT IF THUY DOUBTED WHAT I SAID THE ICC OR SOME IMPARTIAL BODY COULD EXAMINE THE GAS WE ARE USING.

14. I POINTED OUT THE CHANGE IN US PUBLIC OPINION AND WORLD OPINION SINCE MARCH31. THE OVERWHELMING OPINION IS THAT THE DRV SHOULD TAKE SOME STEP TO SHOW ITS GOOD FAITH. INSTEAD, WE GET ESCALATION BY NVA/VC.

15. I SAID THAT WHEN WE GOT DOWN TO DISCUSSING THE CESSATION OF BOMBING AND RELATED MATTERS, THE APPROPRIATE TIME AND CIRCUMSTANCES FOR THE CESSATION OF BOMBING WOULD BECOME EVIDENT. SO FAR, I SAID, THEY HAD NOT RESPONDED TO MY CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS. I THEN ASKED WHEN THUY WANTED TO MEET NEXT.

Copy LBJ Library

16. AFTER SOME PASSING REMARKS, INCLUDING THE STANDARD LANGUAGE ON CESSATION OF BOMBING, THUY PROPOSED THAT WE MEET NEXT WEDNESDAY. I SAID I WANTED TO REPEAT ONE THING BEFORE WE ENDED THE MEETING, AND I THEN SAID WE WOULD LEAVE SOUTH VIETNAM WHEN THE NORTH VIETNAMESE DID AS WE HAD SAID IN THE MANILA COMMUNIQUE. I SUGGESTED MONDAY FOR OUR MEETING. THUY SAID HE WAS BUSY MONDAY AND TUESDAY. I SAID I WOULD RECOGNIZE THE DAY ON WHICH THEY WERE BUSY AND ASKED IF WE COULD NOT MEET BEFORE MONDAY. THUY SAID NO. NEXT MEETING IS WEDNESDAY JUNE 19.
HARRIMAN

Copy LBJ Library